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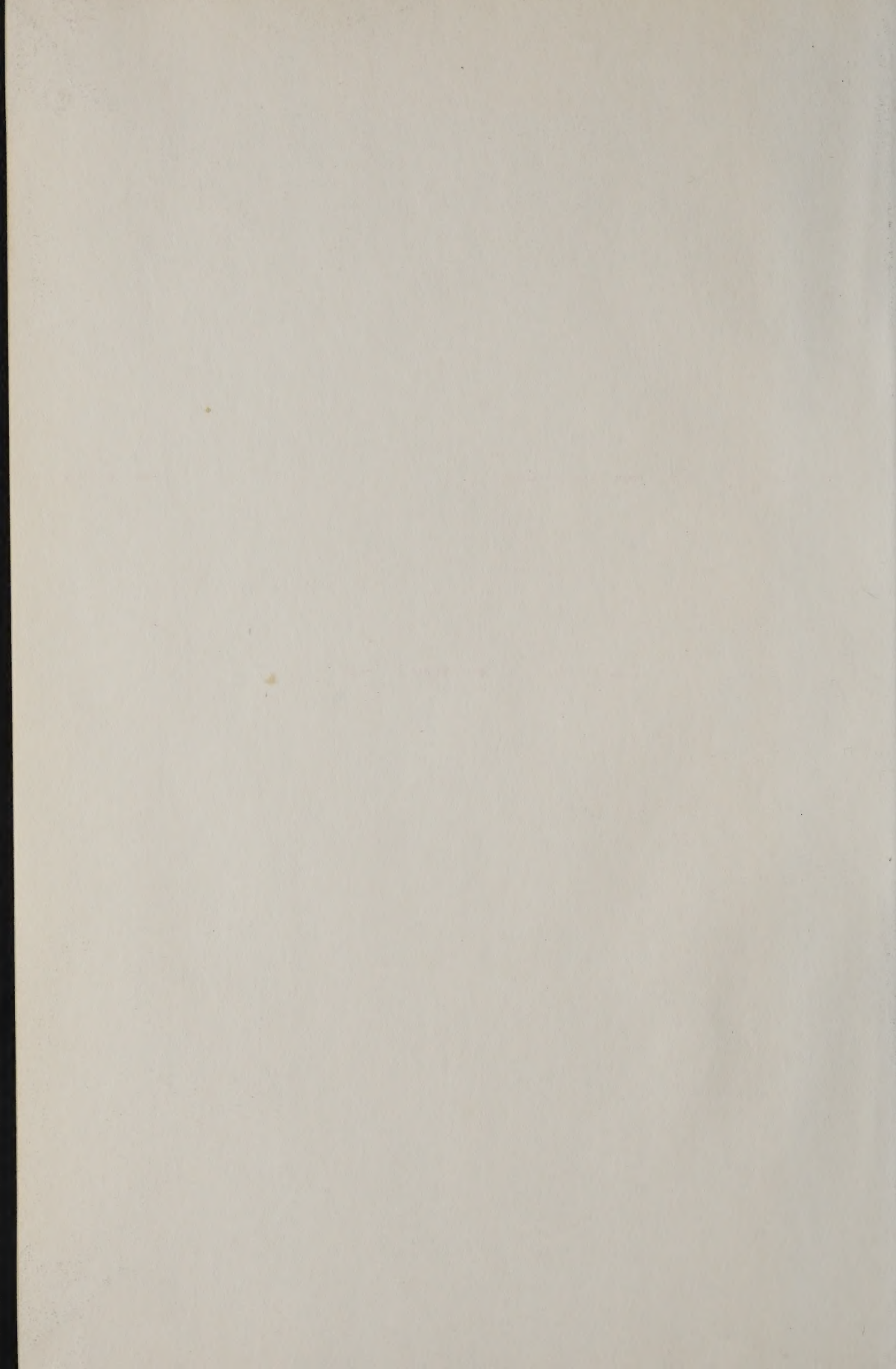


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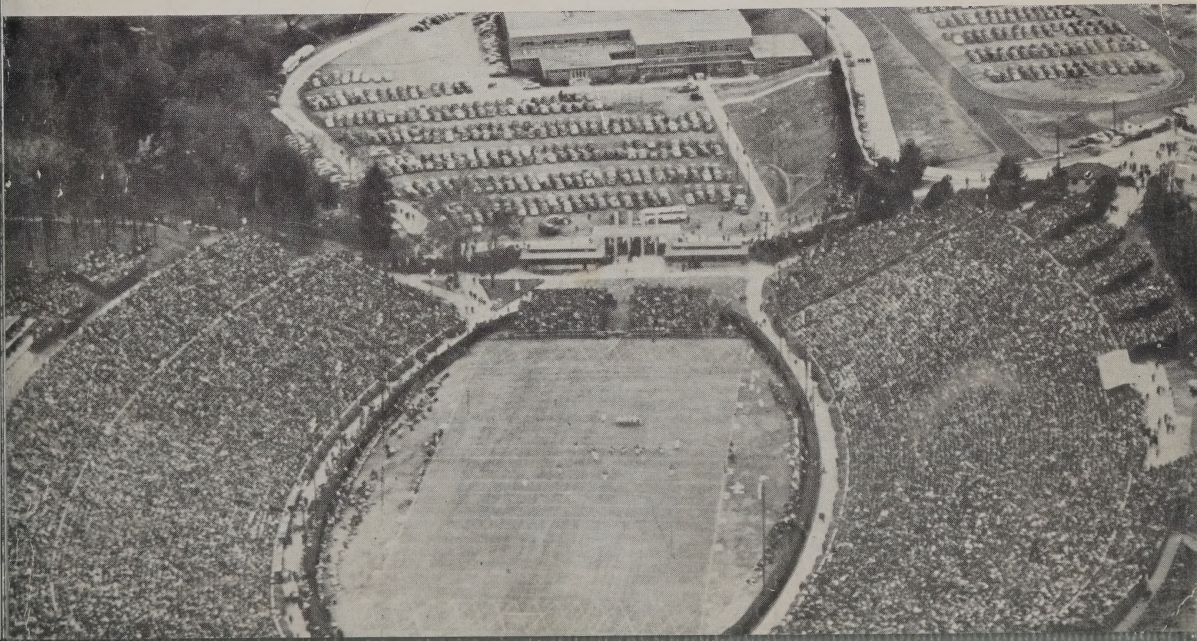




# ATHENS, GEORGIA *Low*

*Home of the University of Georgia*

1801-1951







# ATHENS, GEORGIA

1801-1951

Athens is justly called "The Classic City." Like its counterpart of old, it is the home of persons renowned in every field of human endeavor — education, politics, law, oratory, journalism, medicine, architecture, science, industry. The pages of one small booklet cannot possibly provide space even to mention all that merits recall in such a record at this the sesquicentennial of its beginnings. Thus it must be remembered that persons, places, things named herein are but examples of the truly great who have passed and are passing this way.

1982437

This booklet, which will be distributed to the taxpayers of the City of Athens, was published by the Mayor and Council as a public service and in celebration of our one-hundred and fiftieth birthday.

These pages are gratefully dedicated to all the men and women who have contributed or are contributing to the progress of the City of Athens.





# I

## A CITY IN THE MAKING

**T**HERE are few exceptions to the rule that every worthy endeavor has a beginning, a middle, and an end. The building of a community is one of those exceptions. We have behind us the beginning, though we cannot with exactness point it out, and we have a century and a half which some might call the middle of such building. We are fortunate that the end is not yet in sight so that we can continue to build for the future. The story of the one hundred and fifty years which have slipped by since Athens was an identifiable town is truly amazing.



*Old Franklin Hotel, now home of Athens Hardware Company*

In the summer of 1801 a committee of five, John Milledge, Abraham Baldwin, George Walton, John Twiggs and Hugh Lawson, came up the Oconee River to select a site for the University which had been chartered in 1785. These enterprising gentlemen travelled as far as Cedar Shoals to the spot later occupied by the Athens Factory to investigate a tract of land owned by Daniel Easley. John Milledge, Governor of Georgia, bought 633 acres of land from Easley and donated it to the state for the University. The University, then called Franklin College, opened in the fall of 1801 and with it was born the town of Athens, though it was not so called until several years later. The history of the town's progress and that of the University has been one ever since.

At the time of the committee's visit there were probably a dozen houses in the community. There was one main hotel located on the corner later occupied by the Dupree Building and kept by Mr. Stevens Thomas. The Swinging Limb—only "modern" hotel in the settlement—was located on what is now Broad Street just beyond Thomas Street, then Alley No. 2, toward the river and kept by Mr. Cary.

Twenty years after the time of the official incorporation of the town, Athens could boast a population of "583 free people, 26 four wheeled carriages and 26 widows," according to the records of the



*Front Street facing campus 1850's (now Broad Street)*





*College Avenue looking North about 1893*

Athens Manufacturing Company. In the way of businesses, there was a tailor shop, a bakery, a blacksmith shop and several building contractors. Present day Lumpkin Street was the extreme western boundary of the town. The water supply consisted of three springs, fortunately located at strategic spots in the town. Paved streets, sidewalks, sewerage systems and street lights were things not yet thought of.



*College Avenue looking North, 1951*

Within fifty years after its birth the City of Athens extended in all directions one and a half miles from the college chapel and had a population of nearly 3,560. A railroad served the town and industry was on the upswing. Athenians had gained the right to select their own town officials—an intendant and seven wardens chosen from the respective city wards.

A town hall stood in the middle of Market Street—now Washington Street. This building, very modern for its day—served various purposes. It was the center of the city's government as well as the center of trade for the townspeople. In its basement was the only fresh meat market of the city. When an animal was butchered and dissected for sale, it was customary to ring the Town Hall bell to notify the villagers of the fact. Soon the inadequacy of such a situation became obvious and Athens solved the problem by building a market house. Stalls were rented at public auction to those who had products for sale. To assure the necessary patronage, city council forbade the sale of fresh meats elsewhere in the city.

Industry in Athens extended to three milliners, two mantua makers, the Athens Manufacturing Company (oldest industrial establishment in Athens), the Georgia Factory (first mill for making cotton cloth south of the Potomac), and Southern Mutual Insurance Company (first full fledged insurance company in Athens, and one of the few really mutual companies). The town saw its first experiments with a gas works for lighting purposes. The gas was made by burning pine knots and the intensity of the illumination depended upon the fatness of the pine. Citizens for the first time had their streets lighted—or partially lighted—at public expense, when the city council decided to erect some poles at regular intervals from the post office on E. Clayton to Franklin Street and surmount them with lanterns. The town made a small beginning in the area of public education when council appropriated the sum of \$100 to the support of the free schools of Athens.

The city's gross receipts for 1853 reached tremendous proportions—\$1903.17 for the year. A glance at the things for which the city did not spend its money in those days will explain the possibility of staying within such financial limits. There were no paved streets. The story goes that there were times when even a good mule, despite its prowess and courage, could not get through. There were no sidewalks except those built by individuals in front of their homes. Candles or oil lamps, later gas piped in by a private company, served for

lighting. Trash and garbage was burned at home for the city did not undertake to dispose of it for the citizens. Public schools had not been established in Athens though the city had given thought to the need for such schools. For the most part each householder furnished his own police and fire protection. Considering these things it is not amazing that the city's expenditures could be maintained below the \$2000 mark for an entire year.



*State Normal School (Now Coordinate Campus)*

Another fifty years saw the Classic City develop into one of the most modern towns of its day. By 1869 it could boast of a street-railway freight line between the Georgia Railroad depot and the extreme end of Broad Street. By 1885 the Classic City Street Railway operated for the convenience of the townspeople carrying passengers between outlying points and the center of town. Its motor power—Texas mules—proved adequate for the time and served the people well so long as the line continued.

In 1872 Athens became the county seat of Clarke County. Naturally, with the transfer of county business to the city, much additional and interesting activity was entailed. A Board of Health was appointed by the mayor in 1873. This was one of the first in the nation. In 1881 the Athens police force consisted of a Chief, a Lieutenant, and a Sergeant. The year 1882 was a momentous one for the town. The telephone put in an appearance. Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Company began operation in Athens. During its first year it had thirty-six subscribers. About the same time the people of the



town were given a real department store. Colonel Moses G. Michael opened his store on Broad and Jackson where the Refrigeration and Appliance Company now stands. But that was not all—Athens got a real water works.

Charles E. Robinson of New York City undertook to furnish water to the town. As a business investment as well as a public service the venture proved unsuccessful. After a short time the management of the plant was sued and the business was sold under mortgage foreclosure. The pipes were dug up, the stand pipe was taken down, and the power house was burned to the ground. In spite of the unfortu-

nate end of Mr. Robinson's experiment, it served a worthy purpose—the people of Athens had a taste of the convenience of such a system and a bigger and better one was sure to follow.

In 1885 the people of Athens voted to establish a public school system. A school board was appointed and free public education assumed its rightful importance in the scheme of the community.

By then the city had passed its infancy and supported enough activity to make mud streets objectionable. Several blocks of Broad Street had been paved



*Washington Street School*

in 1885, though an all-out program was not begun for several years.

In 1888 a street lighting program got under way. And in 1889 John R. White is said to have appeared on the streets of Athens with the first motor car seen in these parts. By this time Athens had a population of 8,109.



*Intersection of College Ave. and Washington about 1908*

In 1891 a public supported fire department was organized to take the place of the renowned voluntary and private organizations.

A sewerage system of 1200 feet of drain pipes was completed and the first electric street cars raced along the tracks at eight miles per hour—much too fast for the more cautious citizens of Athens.

The first budget system for the city was initiated in 1891, and Athens began to watch its finances. The total receipts for the city had increased from \$1903.17 in 1853 to \$165,475.75 in 1892. In 1898 a contingent of United States troops had encamped on Hill Street. The combination of army, an unusually rainy season and more modern modes of transportation impressed upon the town the need for better streets. Consequently, council voted to begin an expanded paving program. In 1909 the first bonds for such a program were issued.



*Car Belonging to Mr. Dearing, 1904*





*Campus about 1890*

The chief purpose of this story is to illustrate the progress made in the city since 1901, for its development up to that time was appropriately celebrated on the centennial of its birth. This more recent progress can best be portrayed by reference to specific aspects of the life of the Classic City.



*Milledge Avenue about 1909*



## II

### A CITY OF BEAUTIFUL AND HISTORIC HOMES



*Home of Henry W. Grady, Prince Ave.*

**H**ENRY GRADY, advocate of the "New South" and possibly the South's greatest journalist of his day, was born in a frame house on the corner of Hoyt and Jackson Street. He spent his early childhood days in his later home on Broad Street next to the Dorsey home. While still a youngster, he moved with his family to the Prince Avenue Home pictured above.

Crawford W. Long was born in Danielsville, Georgia in 1815. At the age of 19 he graduated from Franklin College and 5 years later from the Medical School of the University of Pennsylvania. In the Fall of 1841 he opened his office in Jefferson, Georgia. During his practice there he discovered the benefits of sulfuric ether as an anesthetic. For this he is honored as one of the world's most worthy benefactors and was voted a place in the Hall of Fame in Washington. In 1851 he moved to Athens and practiced medicine here until his death in 1878.



*Crawford W. Long Home, now a University Dormitory, Hull St.*



*Home of Col. T. R. R. Cobb, Prince Avenue*



Col. Thomas R. R. Cobb, known as the most brilliant lawyer of Georgia in his era, was a member of the General Assembly of Georgia at the time the secession question arose. He became the "idol of the day" from the first speech he made before that assembly in November 1860. He began his practice in Athens in 1842, was reporter for the State Supreme Court, 1849-1857, was author of *Cobb's Digest* and one of the Commissioners who prepared the Code of Georgia in 1860. He was appointed Brigadier-General of the Confederate Army in November 1862 and was killed at the Battle of Fredericksburg, Virginia.



*Wilson Lumpkin Home, now used as Ag Campus Library, was built in 1830, a copy of the first building in Athens—the old mill house which stands abandoned at Cedar Shoals.*



*Home of Senator Benjamin Hill, now home of the President of the University of Georgia*



*Old Hodgson Home, once used as a Confederate Hospital, now houses the Alpha Delta Pi Fraternity.*





*E. K. Lumpkin Home, used as an annex for the Young Harris Methodist Church, Home of the Ladies' Garden Club of Athens, organized 1891, First Garden Club of America.*



*The Upson Home on Prince Avenue*



*Carr's Hill Original Home. One of the earliest in Athens.*



*Normal School, University Campus, 1900*





*Darwin Home, Corner of Milledge and Dearing*



*Old Snelling Home, Hull Street*



*Gran Ellen Drive, looking west from Milledge*



*Scene on Prince Avenue, looking east from Cobb Street*





*Phinizy Home on Milledge*



*Dearing Home on Milledge*

### III

#### THE CITY COMES OF AGE

THERE are certain services which go into the makeup of a modern city. There must be thoroughfares over which people may travel with a fair degree of safety and convenience. There must be the means of transportation, the modern conveniences such as lights, heat, water, electricity, and communication facilities. There must be adequate protection of life and property and the facilities for an enlightened citizenry. By the turn of the century Athens had made a fair start in each of these fields.

A look at the progress made in the services rendered by the city will lend justification for the city's title "The Classic City" for reasons other than its University and its beautiful homes, though each of these has helped to make it what it is today.



*City Hall completed just after the turn of the century. At that time there was no traffic light, no bench for prospective bus passengers, and no cars of the vintages seen in this picture taken in 1951.*



**STREETS:** In 1898 the first extensive street paving was done in Athens. The havoc caused by the tramping of soldiers through the mud streets of the town did much to hasten the program. In 1900 the first "street paving bonds" were sold. By 1932 there were 376,956 square yards of paved streets in the town. This added up to 26.6 miles of pavement 24 feet wide. The city spent \$15,646.90 on its street department that year.



*Clayton Street East across Thomas  
Personnel of Trussell Motor Company*

In 1933 the street department's equipment consisted of two 1928 "A" model trucks, a Wehr one-man scrape, one Adams leaning wheel horse drawn Fordson tractor, a rock crusher and screens, six mules, three wagons and two concrete mixers—one three bag and the other a one bag.

In 1936 Lumpkin Street was widened to 36 feet, the Belgium blocks were taken up and the street repaved. In that year 30,000 square yards of concrete streets were built, bringing the total paving to 29.7 miles—about one-tenth of the streets in daily use. By 1937 Athens had 31.9 miles of 24 feet paved streets. In 1948 the street department completed the largest building program in its history. A total of 7.09 miles of paving and 9.73 miles of concrete curbing and gutters were

constructed. By the close of 1949 Athens could boast of 56.65 miles of paved streets or 56.88 percent of the street miles of the city.

**LIGHTS:** Athens is a well lighted city. Three quarters of a century ago the citizens of Athens viewed for the first time street lights in their city. City Council had decided to erect some poles at regular intervals from the post office to Franklin Street (110 E. Clayton to what is now College Avenue) and to surmount them with lanterns. In 1897 the Athens Manufacturing Company undertook to operate a street lighting system for the town, and in 1898 the job was taken over by the Athens Electric Company. By 1932 there were 364 electric lights on the streets of town. By 1948 there were 450 of the 600 c.p. (candle power) lights, 40 of the 250 c.p. lights and 36 white way 600 c.p. lights. For additions and upkeep of its street lights in 1948, the city paid \$19,476.59.

December 12, 1896 Brumby's Drugstore in downtown Athens was lighted by current generated from the "white coal" of the Middle Oconee many miles away. On that day Athenians were introduced to the conveniences of electric lights for their homes. In 1899 there were 3,480 individual lights in the homes of the city. In 1938 the count reached 35,000 and by today there is scarcely a home in Athens which is not wired for electricity.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT:** The job of protecting the lives and property of a community usually falls to three departments: police, fire, and health. Athens has reason to be very proud of these three departments of its government. Each does a remarkably good job at an unbelievably low cost.

From 1806 to 1847 the town of Athens was governed by a commission of three to seven men. What policing had to be done was by one of these men. In 1847 the government was changed to an intendant and seven wardens, all elected by the people. Each section of the city selected its warden and each warden was responsible for policing his section. Town marshals were assigned specific police duties. We read in the minutes of council for January 9, 1847 that Joseph G. McAllister was elected Deputy Marshal with the following duties: to ring the market bell, notifying the people that fresh meat was available at Town Hall; to act as clerk of the market located in the basement of the Hall; to patrol and superintend the streets west of the market. The marshals were instructed to do other odd jobs in the way of administering the laws passed by council. For instance, on March 28, 1854 they were instructed to put a stop to marble playing



anywhere in town on Sundays and on the sidewalks during the week. The marshals had to enforce the law which forbade any vehicle to cross one of the town's bridges at a pace faster than a walk, for even in those days "speed-demons" presented a problem.

In 1858 all police officers were required to wear badges whenever on active duty. The treasurer's report for 1892 tells us that the city collected \$1,753.10 in fines for the year and \$14.60 for prison fees. It spent \$8,837.86 for police services. By 1900 the police force consisted of a chief, lieutenant and twelve patrolmen.

All of this is a far cry from the modern police service offered to the townspeople of Athens in 1951. The city now affords a police force of 34 men who are well trained in police duties and are organized into three groups, traffic division, uniform division, and detective division. Since 1948 the Police Department of Athens (which has served as a model for many Georgia cities and towns) has ranked, according to the standards of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as one of the best in the Southeast. Its detective division is equipped with facilities for fingerprinting and photographing as well as for keeping a complete cross file of records of all persons detained by the



*Early Police Force*

department as suspects. It was one of the first divisions in the state to install a one-way mirror system for permitting a witness to make identification without threat of injury because of the information they may give.



*Clayton Street Between Lumpkin and College*

The force operates three cars which are equipped with three-way radios so that sheriff, chief of police and officer may communicate whenever necessary. These cars work in close harmony with equally well equipped cars belonging to the county.

There are four new motorcycles fitted with two-way radios, which work in cooperation with county, state and federal officers, all in an attempt to serve the people of Athens better than individual work could possibly do.

The department keeps a careful record of all calls received, accidents which occur within its jurisdiction, arrests made, property reported lost or stolen and the results of any action taken by a member of the department as such. Homeowners, leaving the city for a vacation or business trip, may request the department to make periodic inspections of the premises during their absence.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT:** In 1849 the people of Athens were amazed at the rapidity with which fire destroyed the Athens Factory. As a result of that experience the Hope Fire Company was organized. It con-



sisted of a captain, a chief engineer, a secretary-treasurer, and a number of volunteer fire fighters.

In 1860 a second fire company, Pioneer Hook and Ladder, was chartered. While all able-bodied men are expected to lend a hand in the fighting of fires, membership in one of these companies was something special. Other than exception from jury service, poll tax and street service, membership carried no official compensation. It did entail a certain degree of social distinction which was of value to those who participated. The story goes that when Hope and Pioneer went into action every townsman who could walk, even with a stick, attended the fire and joined in the fun. But if you get the impression that these were great only in fire-fighting, you should have seen them compete in the street meets which were the order of the day—or so the critics say. Pioneer represented Athens in the Macon tournaments of April 1884. These brave men topped all previous records—they ran 125 yards with the ladder, sent a man to the top, brought him down, put the ladder back in place—all in 32 seconds. A reputable historian of Athens tells us that “at home or abroad Pioneer’s colors never trailed in defeat—or if they did, it wasn’t fair.”

During this period there were seven other fire companies fitted



*Volunteer Fire Company ready for workout.*

and ready to help protect the lives and property of Athenians from the ravages of fire. These companies owned little equipment other than horse-drawn wagons, hose of a sort or a number of buckets, a couple of good wooden ladders and a goodly supply of enthusiastic men who thoroughly enjoyed the services they rendered. Any person who furnished a horse was paid a dollar if the fire occurred during the day and half that much more if it occurred during the night. One silver dollar was the reward to the person who first sounded the alarm of fire.

By 1891 the City of Athens established a municipal fire department. George MacDorman was made first fire chief and the management of fires was put on a strict business basis. With this step toward progress much of the glamor and fun of fire fighting disappeared from the Athens scene and in its place came a greater feeling of security.

The citizen's protection against the hazards of fire rivalled that of any town of comparable size in the country.

There were two stations—one on the corner of Jackson and Washington (formerly headquarters of Hook and Ladder Company) and the other in the middle of the street below the Costa Building. The engines were horse-drawn and the equipment was very modern for its day. The harness was attached above the wagon in such fashion that it could be dropped into place with little ado. The fire chief preceded the fire truck on horseback. There were fifteen paid firemen.

In 1901, the Southern Mutual Insurance Company presented Chief MacDorman with a fine new buggy and Station No. 2 was moved to its present site on Prince Avenue at Hill. There were 23 alarm bells which communicated with the Presbyterian Church as well as the engine house. As soon as the alarm was sounded, the church bell was rung.

In 1912, Station No. 1 was moved to its present site on Thomas Street, and the first motorized truck was moved into headquarters. In 1913 a motorized truck replaced the horsedrawn wagon at No. 2.

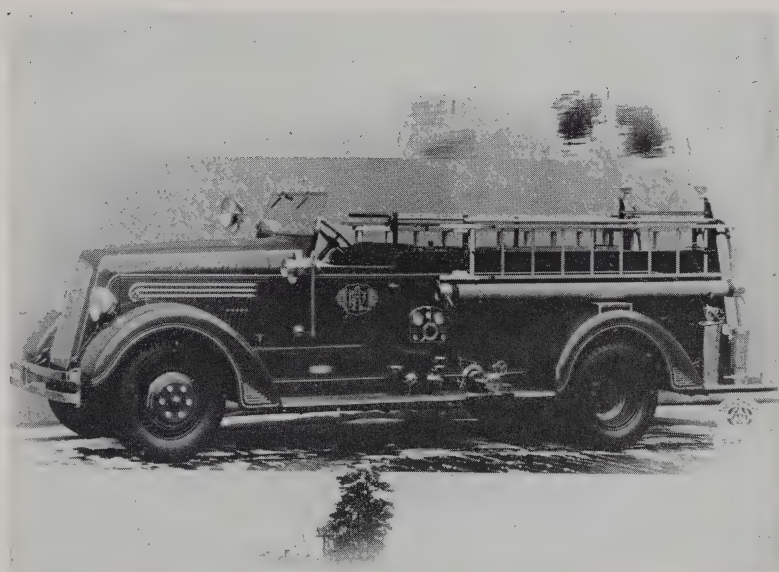
In 1921 Athens again faced the ruin of a devastating fire and saw the necessity of even better equipment. The Department had no pump engine and therefore was practically helpless before the fire which broke out next door to Michael Brothers and destroyed that establishment and several others causing nearly a \$1,000,000 damage. Almost immediately the Department was fitted with a pump truck, an additional 750 gallon engine and four additional firemen.

By 1950 the City of Athens offered to its citizens fire protection





*Here we have the "horse and buggy" days;*



*and here the motorized truck era;*



*and lastly, the "self-elevating-steel ladder" era.*

unsurpassed by any town its size in the state. Three well equipped stations are situated at strategic points in the city—one in the downtown section, one in the Prince Avenue section, and one in the Five Points area.

The services of the fire department are offered to the county free of cost when any public building or public service is endangered and to private properties for a nominal charge.

Does the excellent services rendered by the fire department pay off in the long run? A glance at the figures will answer the question. In 1928 the total property loss in Athens due to fire reached \$40,653. The devastating McGregor fire accounted for \$20,138.25 of this. In 1945 the fire loss was \$52,132.48; in 1946 it sank to \$22,249; in 1948, excluding the big Hulme Warehouse fire, it was \$19,006. The United States per capita loss over a seventeen year period is slightly more than \$5. For Athens over the same years it was \$1.20 per capita. In 1949 the total loss in Athens was \$11,272.56 or 32 cents per capita.

**HEALTH SERVICES:** The first Board of Health of Athens met June 14, 1898. At that meeting the Board passed three ordinances or rules: (1) requiring all physicians of Athens to report all deaths occurring in their practice within twenty-four hours of the time of death; (2) requiring all physicians to report all cases of infectious or contagious



diseases to the clerk of council within twenty-four hours of diagnosis; (3) requiring the flushing of all sewers within the fire limits of the city once a week between May 1 and October 1. Such were the beginnings of a health program for Athens.

Much of the activity of the Board of Health from 1899-1909 centered around the control of smallpox in Athens. What were the results of its work? From 1898 to 1908 there were literally hundreds of cases of smallpox in the city. As late as 1924 there were 72 cases. During the decade of 1940-1950 no cases were reported in Clarke County.

In 1908 the Board was reorganized and the foundations of modern public health practice were established in Athens.

From 1910 to 1926 the Health Department consisted of a reputable physician as chairman of the board, two sanitary inspectors, a full-time bacteriologist, a medical examiner for school children and a clerk. A considerable amount of money was spent to equip the health department laboratory where milk and water analyses were made and a limited amount of bacteriological work done for doctors in town.

Various methods for the control of flies, mosquitoes and typhoid were tried with moderate success. In 1922 a full time dairy and food inspector was added to the personnel of the Department. The following figures spell out the success of the Department's fight against typhoid and diphtheria, 1922-1932: In 1922 there were 117 cases of



*Simon Michael Clinic*

typhoid and 13 deaths. In 1931, 47 cases were diagnosed and between 1941 and 1950 there were only 5 cases in the entire county.

In 1922 there were 93 cases of diphtheria and 16 deaths; 1926 the number of cases was 66. During the period from 1943-1950 there was an average of 7 cases per year.

In 1926 the City and County Health Boards were consolidated and put under a full time Health Commissioner and an efficient staff of trained health workers who have carried on a comprehensive modern health program.

Because of the increase in the services of the Department and the inaccessibility of the health offices for many persons in Athens, the Mayor and Council, in cooperation with the Commissioners of Clarke County, have appropriated funds for the erection and equipment of a modern Public Health Center Building with assistance from the Federal Government made available by the Hill-Burton Act and from the State of Georgia by act of the General Assembly.

This building when open for service in 1951 will give the citizens of Athens and Clarke County facilities for public health services second to none in the State. As personnel become available in addition to the health program now carried on, free X-ray and fluroscopic services, expansion of laboratory services, diabetic detection for citizens, a well equipped clinic for the diagnosis of heart disease, increased dental care



*St. Mary's Hospital*





*Athens General Hospital*



*Athens Medical Center  
Prince Avenue and Chase Street*

for underprivileged children, a library and public health education section where exhibits, moving pictures, lectures, health conferences and classes on nutrition, sanitation and general hygienic living may be offered. Facilities for the opening of a program in mental hygiene will be available.

The people of Athens are served by two well-equipped and well-staffed hospitals: St. Mary's and Athens General.

**LIBRARIES:** "Books Build a better Georgia." This was the motto of the Women's Club of Athens which initiated the move for a public library for the town. In 1930 a library with 1,300 books was opened in the old building next to the Athens National Bank. The room was donated by Mr. John White Morton, the water by the city and the lights by Georgia Power Company. At the end of the first three weeks over 200 persons had borrowed books from the library and many more had come in to look around. The library sponsored a "children's hour" and Mrs. Joseph Magill volunteered to act as storyteller. This naturally attracted the small fry to the library where they found books to fit their every taste.

In 1936-1937 the library received \$900 a year from the city and \$300 from the counties serviced. It served these counties with book-mobiles which circulated each week at community centers in each county. This is still one of the most useful services rendered by the library and its staff.

In July 1937 Radio Station WTFI scheduled a spot at 5:15 each afternoon for the use of the library. With this and other means of publicity, the library became one of the more popular places in town. In August 1937 there were 3,816 registered readers and 2,437 books in circulation. In September of that year the library was moved to the Y.M.C.A. building on Lumpkin Street. The staff began a music appreciation hour and started a record collection. This collection has been the constant delight of many persons, old and young, who have found time to listen to a few records while in the library.

By 1949 the library had outgrown its quarters in the Y.M.C.A. and was moved to its present site in the old Stern House, which was built in 1839 and has served at one time or another as a dwelling, boarding house, mortuary, rooming house, and library. It was remodelled to fit the needs of the greatly expanded library.

By the time of the move, the library had 34,000 books, a rather large record collection and many beautiful pictures. During its first





*Athens Regional Library, Old Stern Home (on College and Hancock)*

year in the new building there was a circulation of 73,454 books from the main library and 80,893 through the bookmobiles.

With the additional space in the new building, exhibitions of various sorts—miniature soldiers, stuffed birds, paintings and the like have been sponsored.

Citizens of Athens also have access to the libraries of the University, which have about 257,000 catalogued volumes besides many uncatalogued manuscripts, maps and pamphlets. The Peabody Memorial library serves as a depository for publications of the United States Government and maps issued by the Army Map Service. Current subscriptions are maintained for more than 2,000 periodicals and newspapers. Located in the General Library is a union catalogue of all books in the major libraries of Atlanta.

In October of 1950 ground was broken for the new Ilah Dunlap Little Memorial Library, which will serve the University and community.

COMMUNICATION FACILITIES: A community cannot be progressive

unless it has the means of communication within itself and with the outside world. Although Athens is a relatively small town, it offers its citizens the best in the way of communication facilities.

NEWSPAPERS: Possibly the *Georgia Gazette* was the first newspaper published in Athens. Next was the *Athenian*, a small four-page sheet of five columns to the page. Its contents were more of a literary nature than news as we know it today. Near the middle of the century Mr. James A. Sledge and Mr. A. W. Beese edited the *Southern Banner*, which appears to have been of the news reporting type. At least short items on current local and state events were carried. The *Southern Watchman* was published as a weekly for many years. It carried local advertisements, news items and legal notices for the counties in this area. The *Southern Banner* changed names several times being variously called *Southern Banner*, *Banner*, *Northeast Georgian*, and *Banner Watchman*, it was published as a daily news reporting paper. For many years the *Banner Herald*, only surviving direct descendant of the original *Southern Banner*, has served the Athens community well as a means of advertising, conveying news of importance on the local, state, national and international scene and of providing an outlet for the expression of public opinion through its editorial sheets. It is the official paper of the county and the City of Athens. It has a circulation of nearly 35,000 and gives its readers the benefits of Associated Press Service and teletype leased wires as well as two news picture services.

TELEPHONE: The Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Company established its business here in August 1882 with 36 charter subscribers. At that time the switchboard was located in the rear of Scudder's Jewelry Store and the "Law" system was in use.

In 1889 the exchange was moved to the room over what is now Fickett's Jewelry Store and the system was changed to magneto, using the Blake transmitter, hand generator and grounded circuits. In 1906 the exchange was moved to the Talmadge Building on the southwest corner of Clayton and College Avenue and the system was changed from magneto to the common battery. In 1918 the building on Clayton Street was completed at the cost of \$36,000 and the exchange was moved in. Downtown wires had already been put in underground cables and Mayor A. C. Erwin pulled the string to "cut over" the new exchange. The first call was made by H. J. Rowe to the *Banner* to tell the news.

The first toll line, completed in October 1890, was seven miles long—from Athens to Winterville and also connected the Barberville



community. In 1892 a second toll line was constructed connecting Watkinsville, Bishop and Farmington to Madison and Athens. At Madison, connections were made with Atlanta and Augusta.

From 36 subscribers in 1882, the number jumped to 52 in five years. By 1900 it had reached 234 and by 1915 it had increased to 1,720. In 1930 there were 3000 telephones in town and by 1950 there were 9,110. In 1945 subscribers were furnished with the new "French" type desk phone.



*Pulaski and Broad*

**1982437**

**TELEGRAPH:** A Postal Telegraph office was established in Athens almost a half century ago. In 1876 Western Union opened an office here. In the middle forties, Western Union Telegraph Company bought Postal Telegraph and took over the office in Athens. An average of 425 messages are sent and received through Athens daily.

**POSTAL SERVICE:** There has been a United States Post Office in Athens since the earliest days of the town's existence. Originally it was located on East Clayton Street and from there was moved to what is now the Federal Building on College Avenue. It was moved to its present site on Hancock Avenue in 1942. The Post Office offers special delivery, parcel post delivery, registry of letters and a money order service. Mail is collected at regular intervals from post office boxes on the street corners and in public buildings of the city.



*United States Post Office*

RADIO: Athens' first radio station—WTFI—was moved here from Toccoa Falls Institute in 1928 and was located in the Costa Building. It operated rather successfully until early in 1937 when it was moved to Atlanta and became part of a new company. In April 1938 four business men—Earl Braswell of the *Banner-Herald*, Dr. J. K. Patrick, pharmacist, Tate Wright, retail tire dealer, and C. A. Rowland, wholesale seed dealer, and Lynne Brannon, organized WGAU. This station has operated continuously since that time.

In 1944 WGAU became affiliated with Columbia Broadcasting Company and Athens became one of the dozen or so cities of its size in the United States to offer such facilities to its listeners. In October 1948 the station went on the air with FM as well as AM broadcasting.

In May 1948 a second radio station, WRFC, owned by the Radio Athens, Inc., began broadcasting regular programs in Athens.

All programs originated in temporary studios at the transmitter site on Lake Road until the present studios on Lumpkin Street were completed in 1949.

TRANSPORTATION: In 1885 Mr. Snodgrass, feeling the urge for



adventure, left his native habitat in the sagebrush plains of Texas and brought with him some little mules, which were to furnish the motive power for the first passenger street railway cars operated in Athens. He obtained a charter from Athens and laid 18 pound rails on Broad, College, Clayton, Lumpkin, Hancock, Pulaski and Milledge under the rather imposing title "The Classic City Street Railway Company." Athenians attest the excellence of his service and the company's efficiency rating was "27 car miles per bale of hay." But in spite of the encouraging situation of the company, Mr. Snodgrass grew homesick for his native state and sold out to Mr. J. H. Dorsey. In 1889 the company became "Athens Railway Company" under the management of E. H. Harris and J. T. Voss of Macon. A year later the Athens Park and Improvement Company agreed to pay the company \$5000 a year for four years and connect the system to electric power if tracks would be laid on Boulevard through the Improvement Company's property. On June 23, 1891 an excited and enthusiastic populace viewed the first electric streetcar in Athens. In 1927 the Athens Railway and Electric Company became a part of Georgia Power Company. Three years later the streetcars were replaced by buses, which were operated until 1934 and then discontinued.

Bus service was reinstituted in Athens in 1945. The service was rendered by various companies until 1948 when "Athens City Lines" began operation. The company now operates eleven buses over seven hundred miles per day over nearly thirty miles of bus routes in the city. These buses have averaged carrying 1,000,000 revenue paying passengers per year.

In addition to this public bus system the townspeople are served by two taxi companies.

In 1846 the Georgia Railroad was built from Union Point to Athens. On its first run (with horse-drawn cars) it carried Edward Hodgson and his wife, William P. Hodgson, and Ann Hodgson to Athens. In 1876 the Northeastern Railway came in. The original intention was to build this line to Knoxville, Tennessee, but it was never extended beyond Lula, Georgia. This line is now part of the Southern. The Macon and Northern was built in 1887 and in 1891 the Georgia-Carolina and Northern first opened its doors for business in Athens. Shortly thereafter, the Seaboard Airline took over the G. C. & N. and completed the division from Monroe, North Carolina to Atlanta, thus putting Athens on a through north-south trunkline. By having adequate connections with Atlanta, Georgia and Norfolk, Virginia (each an im-

portant rail center), Athens acquired more and better markets for her products and more adequate transportation for her citizens.

In 1935 the Old South Bus Lines, which had succeeded the Queen City Coach Lines, were taken over by the Atlantic Greyhound Corporation. At present there are five bus lines—Atlantic Greyhound, Southeastern Stages, Southern Stages, Service Coach and Neel Gap Lines—operating into and out of Athens to points North, South, East and West every day.

During the war, the Athens Airport was developed into an adequate field with paved runways, a United States Weather Bureau office and essential buildings. Planes from this field connect with the main airline systems in Atlanta, Georgia and Charlotte, North Carolina.



*Athens Airport*

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES: An enlightened public as well as a citizenry trained in suitable means of making a livelihood are essential to the progress of any community. The City of Athens can boast of schools whose purpose it is to produce these essentials along with those things which make for a more pleasant and well rounded life. The University of Georgia, which celebrates its sesquicentennial simultaneously with





*University Arch, 1951*



*Old College, oldest building on the campus and one of the oldest in Athens, originally used as a dormitory building.*



*New College, second oldest dormitory on the University campus. Was originally completed in 1823. Remodeled in 1951, it now houses the School of Pharmacy.*

the city, is the seat of learning in the state. It is the first state university to be chartered in the United States.

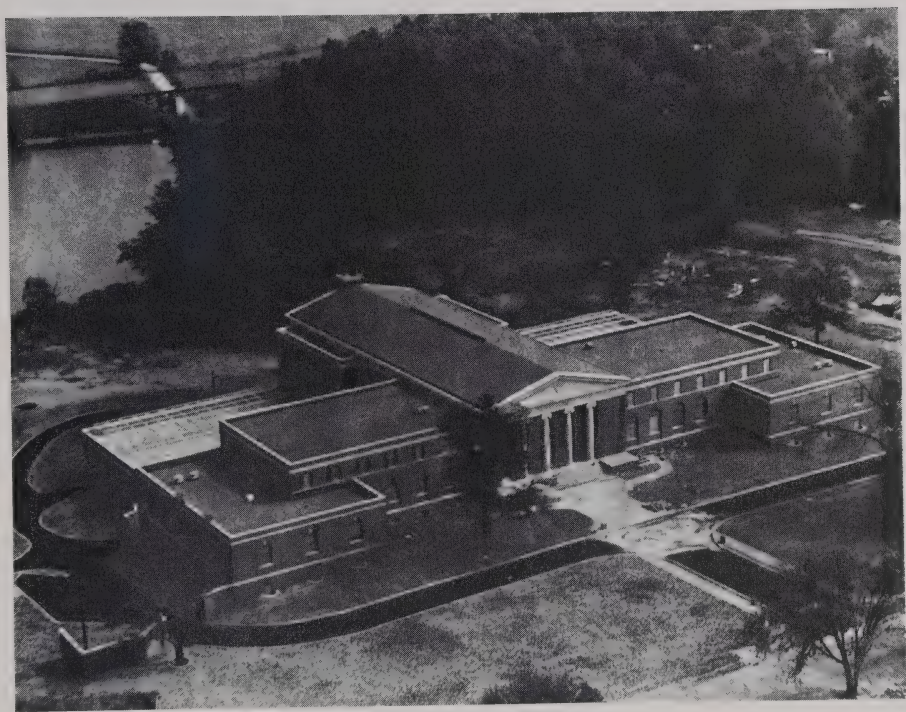
In 1801, the University began operation with "one well-built frame dwelling, entirely equal to the accommodation of the president and his family and another new house equal to the temporary school-room." . . . plus "about seven thousand dollars." President Meigs reported twelve young men in the senior class of 1804.

Since the University is publishing an illustrated catalogue portraying the progress of that institution, suffice it here to say that the student body has increased to 5,431 for the academic year of 1950-51 and to show in pictures some of the buildings which have been built on the campus.





*University Chapel*



*School of Veterinary Medicine*

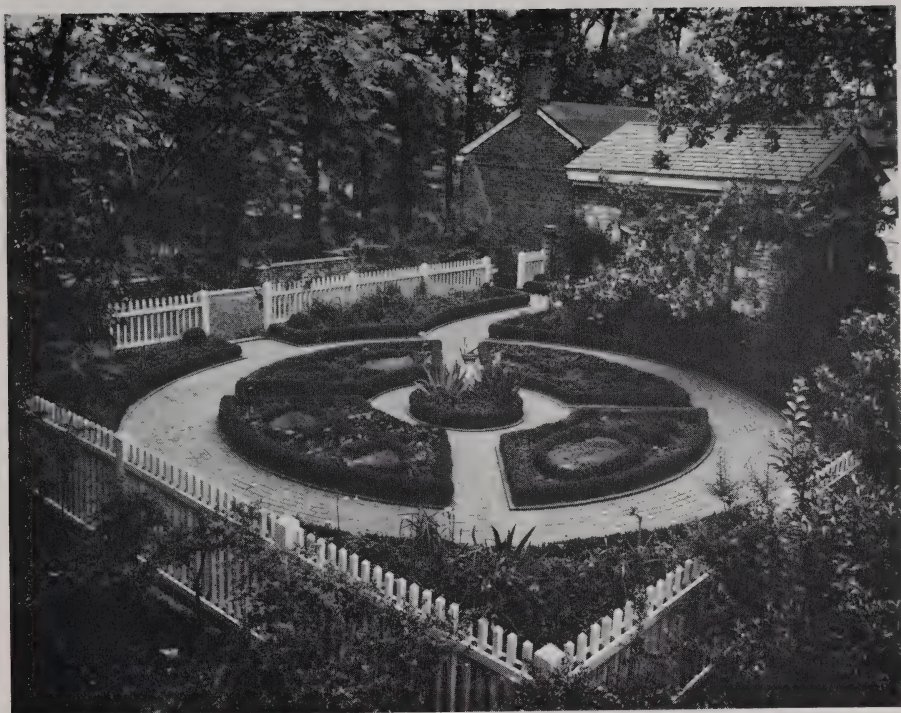


*Academic Building*



*Holbrook Art Museum*





*Home of the Landscape-Architecture School and Memorial Gardens built as a living memorial to the twelve founders of the first garden club in America organized in Athens in 1891. Picture showing boxwood garden unit.*

ATHENS PUBLIC SCHOOLS: On October 15, 1885 the General Assembly of Georgia authorized the establishment of a public school system in Athens and in November of that year the people of Athens went to the polls to vote their support to the system of free schools.

The system was to be managed by a Board of Education composed of two members from each city ward and one from the city at large. At present the management is under a board of two from each ward and two from the city at large all appointed by the mayor and council. The Mayor is an ex-officio member and the board appoints a superintendent.

Temporary buildings were provided on Oconee, Meigs, Foundry and Baxter Streets. The first regular session of the Athens Public Schools began in the fall of 1886 with an enrollment of 1085, a teaching staff of twenty, and a budget of \$10,146.13.

Through the bond issue election, the board received \$20,000 for

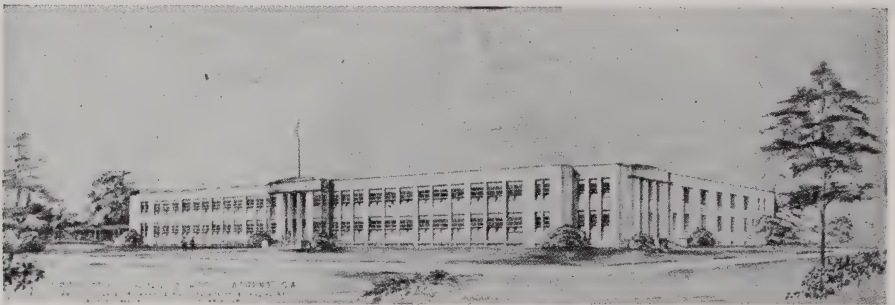


*Police Help Children Across Street*

new buildings and in 1887 two identical buildings were erected: one on Washington Street for the Whites and one on Baxter for the Colored.

In 1888 the ninth grade was added at the Washington Street School, and in the spring of 1890 eight graduating seniors were handed the first High School Diplomas ever issued in this city.

In 1907 Mr. E. B. Mell became principal of the High School Department. On the basis of his recommendation, a new high school building was erected on Childs Street ready for the 1909 session. There



*High School Building under construction, 1951*



were ninety-five students and six teachers. By this time an eleventh grade had been added.

In 1915 the high school was moved to the old county court house on Prince Avenue. There was a student body of 264 and a teaching staff of thirteen. At the time it was estimated that the newly acquired building would accommodate 450 students.

On December 7, 1923, Mell Auditorium, named for E. B. Mell, who served as principal of the high school for thirty-seven years, was dedicated.



*Chase Street School*

A new brick gymnasium for the high school was completed in 1939. In 1949 the citizens of Athens voted a bond issue of \$1,000,000 for a new high school and a new elementary school for Negro children in East Athens.

The high school is under construction on a twenty-six acre site west of Milledge Avenue, and the new Negro elementary school is being constructed on a ten acre site in East Athens.

The Athens Public School system is notable for several things. It was probably the first in the state to include a high school for Negro students. This school, Athens High and Industrial School, offers the same academic courses given in the white school and in addition gives adult classes in cooking, dress designing, nursing, bricklaying, plastering and carpentry. Secondly, the Athens schools have always been at the forefront in curriculum offerings. In addition to the college preparatory course, great emphasis has been placed on vocational training. As early as 1892 a business department was organized in the high school. This was probably the first high school in Georgia to offer

courses in domestic science and home economics. Such courses were added to the school's curriculum in 1908. It was also one of the first Georgia high schools to have an ROTC unit.

There are now twenty-seven buildings in the public school system of Athens with a total valuation of \$1,547,700. With the completion of the new high school and the new Negro school the valuation will be \$2,677,700. The enrollment at present stands at 2,681 whites; 1,527 Negroes in the regular schools, and 1,109 persons in the Veterans Training Program. There are 152 teachers, principals and supervisors.

THE ATHENS VOCATIONAL SCHOOL was opened in April 1946, under the direction of Mr. Charles R. Cox. There were twenty students at that time. By 1951 the enrollment had jumped to 203. The primary



*Vocational School at Work*

purpose of this school is to teach boys and men who do not wish to pursue the academic training of a university the trade best suited to them.

CHRISTIAN COLLEGE OF GEORGIA, located on Hull Street just one block from the University campus, was dedicated July 3, 1949. The purpose of the school is two-fold—to give pre-ministerial training in religion to young men and women who wish to go into the ministry and to give leadership and assistance to others who have chosen some phase of religious work as their vocation.



THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION DIVISION IN ATHENS is a part of the State Department of Education. It is located in Hardman Hall on the University Campus and is under the direction of Mr. Nathan B. Nolan. The primary purpose of the Division is to prepare disabled men and women for employment in which they can earn a living. These services to the physically handicapped citizens of Athens may include medical examinations and vocational diagnosis, vocational guidance and surgical treatment, the furnishing of artificial or mechanical appliances such as an arm or leg, physical and occupational therapy, vocational training to furnish new skills, placement in employment and supervision on the job to help make the necessary adjustments. This Division does not maintain a school or training center but purchases such training from established and recognized institutions, public or private, as the situation demands.

UNION BAPTIST INSTITUTE. This school, which was organized in 1881 by Rev. Collins H. Lyons to help train Negroes for Christian leadership, has become well known for the high standard of its training of Negro children. It is an accredited school which offers in addition to academic subjects courses in music, printing, sewing, cooking and Bible study. It conducts classes in the primary school from one through the eighth grades and in the high school from the ninth through the twelfth. This school to which pupils from many sections of Georgia come has a plant consisting of chapel, classrooms, library, laboratories and a twenty room girls dormitory and an eight room residence with bedrooms for boys.

WATER SUPPLY: Until 1893 the City of Athens purchased its water supply from a private company which had laid about eight miles of mains for the distribution of water. In 1893 the city completed its own water works plant on the Oconee River near the site of the present plant with about 16 miles of mains, a pumping capacity of 1,000,000 gallons a day and the most up to date methods of purification.

In 1918 the Sandy Creek pumping station and a 100,000,000 gallon reservoir was built. With many improvements and an additional two miles of mains by 1923 the water works could furnish nearly 2,000,000 gallons of water per day. In 1931, the city added two new pumping units, one to pump 3,000 gallons per minute or 4,320,000 gallons per day and a second to pump 8,000 gallons per minute or 11,520,000 gallons per day. The operation of the plant for the year cost the city \$57,233.36. In 1935, a 1,100 gallon per minute centrifugal pump was installed at the main pumping station. In 1936, a new filter plant with



*Scene at Water Plant*

a capacity of 3,000,000 gallons per day was added. In 1939 the water works actually furnished the city 49,715,000 gallons of water; in 1948, the amount reached 778,162,000 gallons.

At present there are nearly 100 miles of water mains for water distribution throughout the city. About one-third of this system has been completed since January, 1948.

To maintain a constant water supply, the city has several elevated storage tanks. The first of these was put in the middle of the lot on the corner of Washington and Hancock (now the site of the City Hall) because some members of city council thought the tank would be a pretty structure.



*Water Tower on City Hall Lot*





*Keeping the City Clean*

In January, 1948, there were some 1500 homes in Athens which were not connected with the water mains and therefore did not have available running water for family use. Connections were made for nearly 1000 of these during 1948. At present there are very few homes without water facilities.

**KEEPING ATHENS CLEAN:** A sewerage system was begun in Athens in the early 1880's. Sewerage pipes were laid in the business section of town and the law required that they be flushed weekly between May 1 and October 1. By 1893 the city had spent about \$65,000 on its sewerage system, which consisted of twelve miles of drainage pipes. By 1932 the mileage had been increased to 37.45 and by the close of 1949 to 45.84—10.39 miles of these having been laid in 1948 and 1949.

The city furnishes a very adequate garbage collection service. With seven trucks, waste is collected in the residential sections twice a week and in the business section daily. In 1944 there were 4,920 tons of waste collected in the city and 8,200 tons were disposed of in 1949. An incinerator plant for the disposal of waste has been added to the department's equipment.

All of these add up to a modern city which can be proud of the services it offers to its citizens and of the cooperation of those same citizens in making such services possible.

## IV

### A CITY OF GOOD GOVERNMENT

**I**N 1806 the City of Athens was incorporated by act of the state legislature. Under that act, the town was governed by five commissioners appointed by the legislative body. In 1847 this system was changed to popularly elected intendant, chosen from the city at large and eight wardens, two selected from each city ward. In 1872 this form of government gave way to a mayor-council government. The mayor was elected from the city at large and there were two aldermen from each of the four wards. Elections for these officers were held annually and the person securing the largest number of popular votes in each case was declared elected. In addition to his executive duties, the mayor presided over the mayor's court. He had authority to impose penalties upon any person found guilty of having violated a city ordinance. Appeal from this court lay to the council itself. On appeal, council had authority to increase the penalty imposed by the mayor if, on hearing, the appeal was deemed frivolous.

City council was empowered to pass whatever ordinances it deemed necessary for the security and well-being of the city and its inhabitants. The mayor did not have a veto power of such ordinances. Council fixed the budget, insofar as there was a budget, and served as the chief administrative agency of the city. The mayor had relative little executive authority or responsibility.

The year 1946 is a landmark in the progress of the government in the city. In that year Athens became a coordinated city government with the formerly independent and isolated governmental agencies brought together into a single government under the executive authority of a mayor. The mayor was given additional power and a comparable responsibility to the people of Athens for the efficient operation of the town's government. He became the chief executive of the city with the following administrative departments: fire department, headed by a fire chief, appointed by civil service commission; police department with a chief of police appointed by civil service commission; health department, which is city-county in scope, with a board of

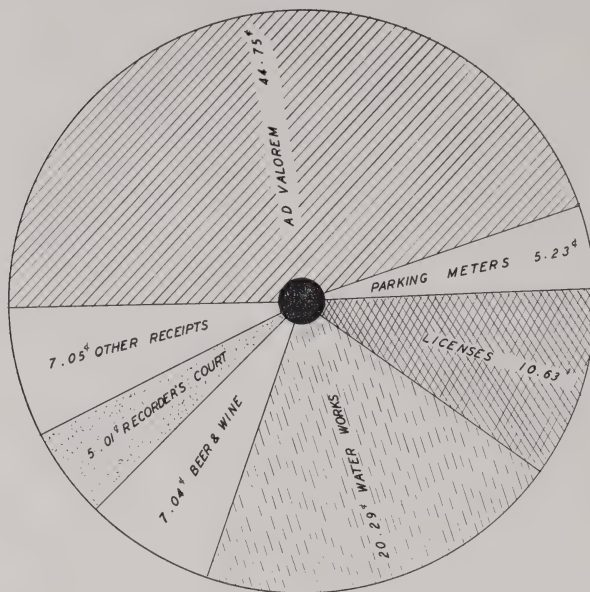


health appointed by mayor and council, which board in turn appoints a health commissioner; public works department, headed by the city engineer who is appointed by mayor and council, composed of several smaller departments: water works, street, sanitary and stockade, all of which function under the supervision of the city engineer; recreational and park development department whose director is appointed by the recreational and park board appointed by the mayor; a board of education appointed by the mayor and council which in turn appoints a superintendent of schools for the city. A city attorney is elected by popular vote, as is the city recorder and civil service commission. Mayor and council appoint a clerk-treasurer and tax evaluator. A glance at these officers now entrusted with the proper operation of the city's government shows a tremendous increase in the activities of the government since the days when a warden served in a legislative, executive and judicial capacity. It also evidences a much greater degree of unity in the government.

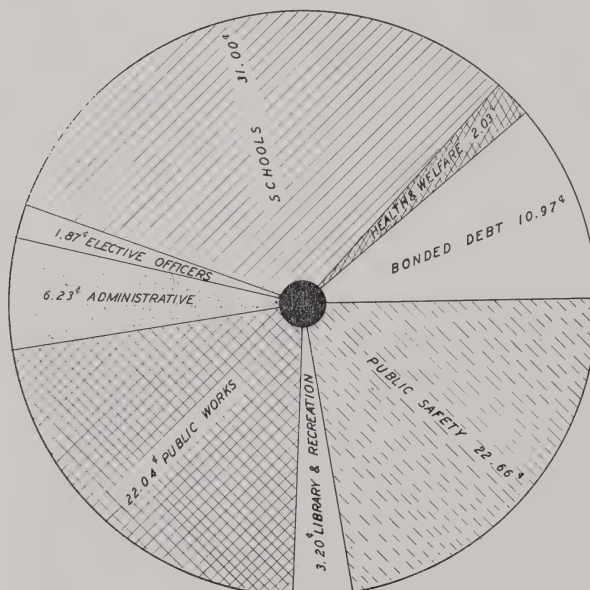
In 1946 the mayor was made the responsible executive of the government with enough authority to fulfill the obligations and duties of his office. He was given the power to veto ordinances of council. He has five days in which to consider measures placed before him. If at the end of that time he has taken no action, the measure becomes law without his approval; thus the people are protected against a dilatory executive or one who might want to hold up legislation through sheer delay. His decision to veto an act of the council may be overridden by a two-thirds vote of the entire council. He is authorized to prepare a budget for the city. Such budget must have the approval of council and if council rejects the budget for the year it becomes responsible for the preparation of the budget. Through this budgetary power the mayor may exercise a degree of control over the agencies of city government by fixing the total amount of money available to them for the year. This means to the people of Athens that one individual whom they have elected is not only empowered to prepare a budget but is, because of that power, responsible to them for the manner in which the city's money is spent.

The mayor is also authorized to nominate the heads of these departments previously filled by persons nominated and elected by council. His nominee is placed before council for approval or rejection. He is empowered to negotiate contracts for the city and must sign before any such contract becomes binding upon the city. With the approval

# ATHENS' INCOME AND EXPENDITURES, 1950



*Where the money comes from*



*Where the money goes*



of the Finance Committee of council, he must sign all vouchers for the city. He is custodian of all city property.

Council, which is the legislative body for the city, consists of two members from each city ward elected by popular vote in each ward for two year terms. It holds one regular monthly meeting and may be called into special session by the mayor. Its meetings are open to the public and complete minutes are kept of the business transacted. These minutes are available to the public at any time. The subjects over which the council has authority are provided for in the Charter. A code embodying all the ordinances and charter provisions presently in force is ready for publication at this time. This will be the first revision of the city's code since 1918.

The city attorney, who serves as legal adviser to council and mayor in all legal matters of concern to the city, attends all council meetings and represents the city in all litigations brought in its name or against it.

The civil service commission is composed of five members, one from each ward, elected by popular vote of the city at large for four year terms and are responsible for the selection of employees of the city police and fire departments on a strict merit basis.

The city recorder serves as judge of the Recorder's Court, formerly the mayor's court. In this capacity he hears cases against violators of the city's ordinances.



*Hon. Cincinnatus Peebles elected in  
1853 and served three terms. 1853,  
1854, 1855*



*Hon. S. C. Reese, elected 1863, served  
four terms*

*Hon. William Gerdine, elected in 1856*

*Hon. William L. Bass, elected 1857*

*Dr. Robert L. Smith, elected 1858,  
served two terms*

*Hon. E. P. Lumpkin, elected 1866*

*Hon. James R. Lyle, elected 1860*



*Hon. F. W. Adams, elected 1861*



*Hon. James D. Pittard, elected 1867,  
1868, and 1873*

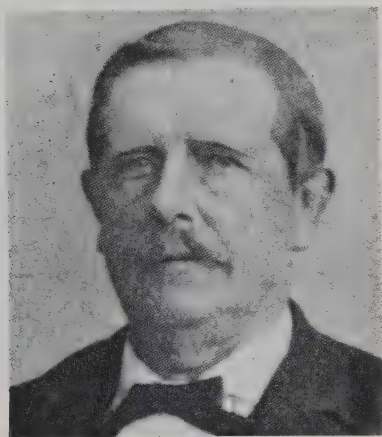




*Hon. Jerry E. Ritch, elected 1869  
and 1870*



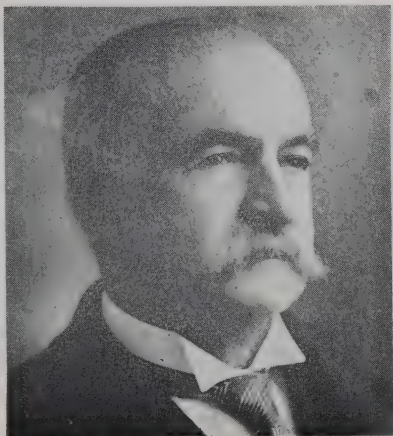
*Capt. Clovis G. Talmadge,  
1876, 1877, 1880*



*Capt. Henry Buesse, elected 1871,  
1872, and 1881*



*Capt. J. H. Rucker  
1878, 1879, 1882*



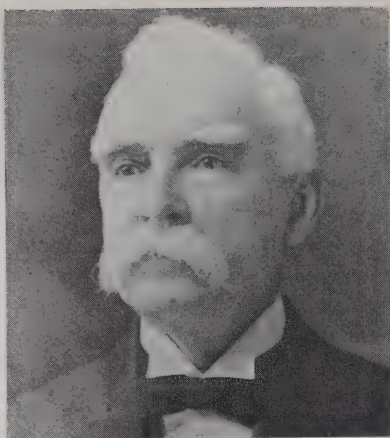
*Dr. William King, elected 1874, 1875*



*Capt. W. D. O'Farrell  
1883, 1884 and 1895*

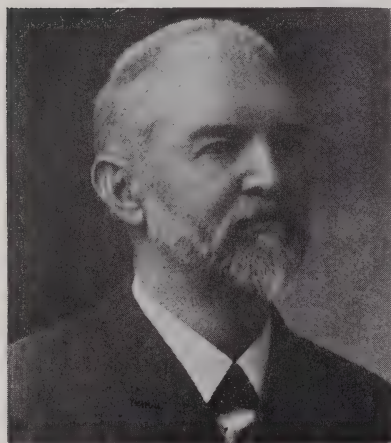


*Hon. J. H. Dorsey, 1884, 1885*

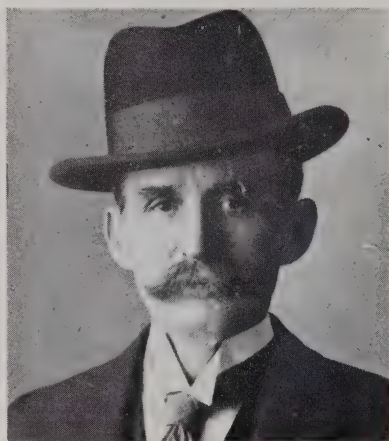


*Dr. J. A. Hunnicutt, 1889*

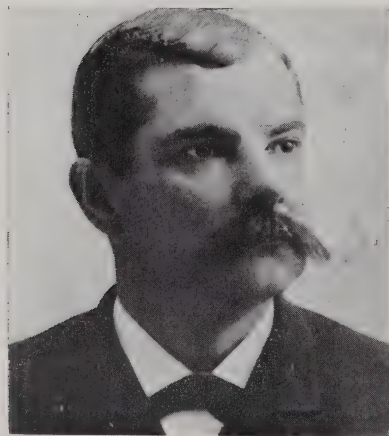
*Hon. E. T. Brown, 1890, served two years.*



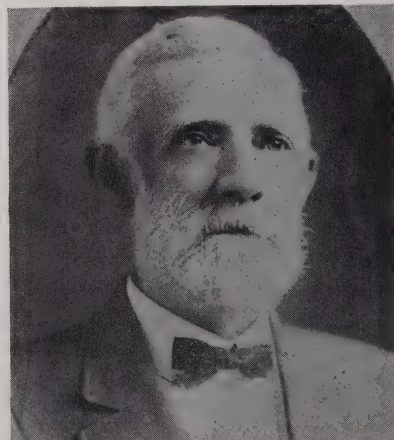
*Hon. R. K. Reeves, 1886*



*Hon. H. C. Tuck, 1892, 1893*



*Hon. A. H. Hodgson, 1887, 1888*



*Capt. J. C. McMahan, 1896, 1897*

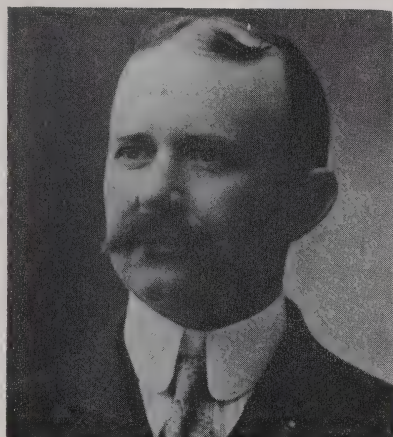




*Hon. E. I. Smith, 1898, 1901*



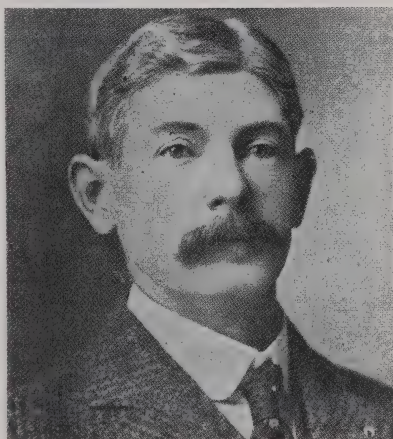
*Hon. H. J. Rowe  
1910 and 1913*



*Hon. J. F. Rhodes, 1902 and 1905*



*Hon. R. O. Arnold  
1916*



*Hon. W. F. Dorsey  
1906, 1909 and 1914*



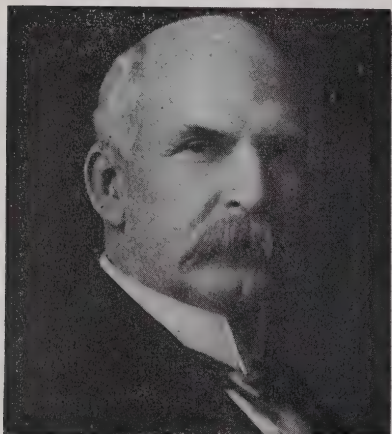
*Hon. O. R. Dobbs  
Filled out term of predecessor*



*Hon. A. C. Erwin*  
1918, 1920



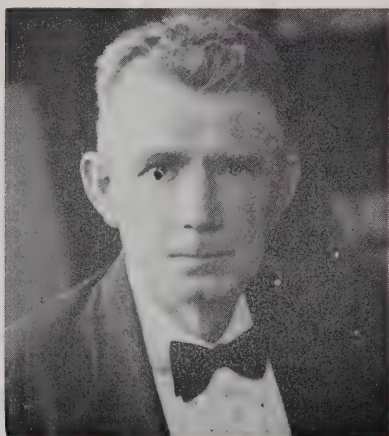
*Hon. A. G. Dudley*  
Elected 1926-1935  
Elected again, 1938, for one term



*Hon. G. C. Thomas*  
1922



*Hon. T. S. Mell*  
1936



*Hon. O. H. Arnold*  
Elected 1924



*Hon. Robert L. McWhorter*  
Elected 1940, served four terms,  
1940 through 1947

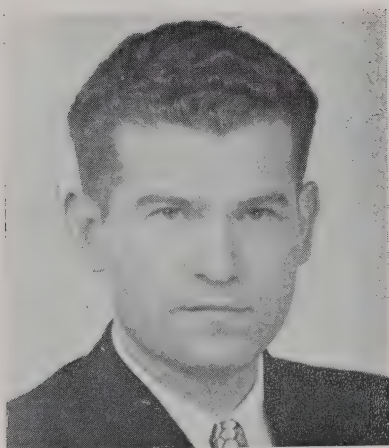


# CITY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, 1951

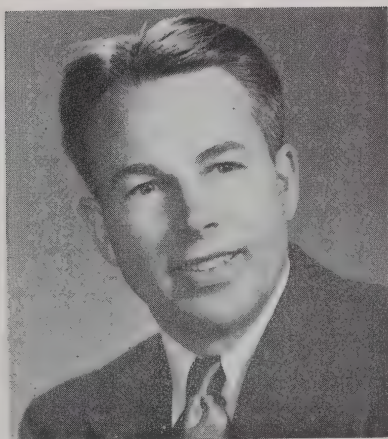
## MAYOR AND COUNCIL



HON. JACK R. WELLS  
*Mayor*



HON. L. T. BOND  
*Alderman*



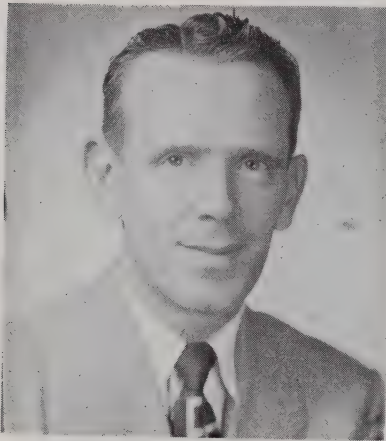
HON. W. N. DANNER  
*Alderman*



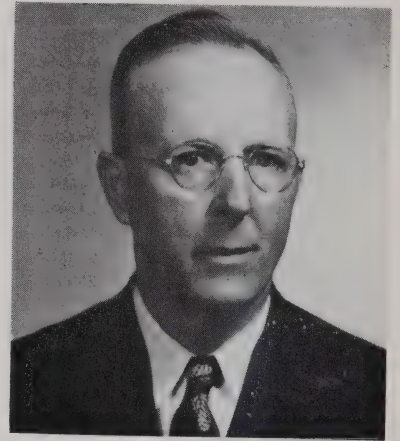
HON. C. S. DENNEY  
*Alderman*



HON. KENNETH GUEST  
*Alderman*



HON. ROGER N. HAZEN  
*Alderman*



HON. R. W. PHILLIPS  
*Alderman*



HON. MERRITT B. POUND  
*Alderman*



HON. O. M. ROBERTS  
*Alderman*





HON. DICK THOMPSON  
*Alderman*



HON. A. W. WIER  
*Alderman*



HON. JACK G. BEACHAM  
*City Engineer and Sup't. of  
Water Works*



HON. A. G. SMITH  
*Clerk and Treasurer*



HON. JAMES BARROW  
*City Attorney*



DR. E. L. HILL  
*Chaplain of Council*

L. OLIN PRICE.....*Judge of Recorder's Court*

T. DOYLE HOWELL.....*City Marshal*

#### CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

ED WIER, *Commissioner*

W. B. MOSS, *Commissioner*

REESE CARNES, *Commissioner*

RUSSELL E. WANSLEY, *Commissioner*

T. M. PHILPOT, *Commissioner*

W. C. THOMPSON, *Chief of Fire*

C. O. ROBERT, *Chief of Police*

*Department*

#### BOARD OF EDUCATION

FRED AYERS, *Superintendent*

EDMUND A. BOOTH

HOWARD McWHORTER

J. K. PATRICK

MRS. WARREN THURMOND

J. SMILEY WOLFE, JR.

O. C. ADERHOLD

J. W. MATTHEWS

F. M. HARRIS

MRS. JULIUS Y. TALMADGE

JOHN THURMOND

H. G. CALLAHAN

R. H. DRIFTMIER

JACK R. WELLS

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*Commissioner of Health*

MRS. WALTER S. BROWN

DR. LINTON Gerdine

HARRY H. ELDER

MRS. T. F. GREEN

W. R. COILE

DR. E. B. HUDSON

JACK R. WELLS

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HENRY ROSENTHAL

FRED LEATHERS

MRS. HAYES EDWARDS

MRS. MILDRED RHODES

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MRS. J. J. WILKINS, JR.

MRS. F. H. MENDENHALL

MRS. J. W. BAILEY

THOMAS H. MILNER, JR.

MRS. FRANK DUDLEY

ABIT NIX

W. W. WIER

TROUTMAN WILSON

HARRY ELDER

MORTON S. HODGSON

RICHARD BLOODWORTH, JR.

JACK R. WELLS



## V

### THE CITY LEARNS TO PLAY

THE old adage that "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy" still holds. In the early history of Athens there was no organized or supervised play provided for the city. Children played ball in the streets and marbles on the sidewalks. But then yards were large and the family could afford places for play for the children. From 1830 to 1857 the chief playground of Athens was the Botanical Gardens which belonged to the University. The Gardens contained about 35 acres and had trees and plants from all parts of the world. Here could be found vast open places for play and shade and a brook for rest or picnics. The Gardens were sold in 1857 and from then to 1938 the city made no real effort to provide playgrounds for its children.

In 1938 the Athens Recreational Park Department was established as a coordinate part of the city's government. This department now has a year round staff of 35, which number includes leadership and maintenance personnel.

The greatest development in parks and recreational facilities has come since 1945 for during the war facilities of the city were concentrated on the service men and women. The department operates in 11 locations in the city. There are 2 community centers, one the Lyndon House on Hoyt Street and the other Memorial Park Club House in Memorial Park beyond Gran Ellen Drive. The first of these is a restored century old landmark. It has 9 rooms including club rooms, office space, game rooms, and kitchen facilities. It offers a comfortable and beautiful spot for social gatherings. It is surrounded by two acres of land which has been made into a playground for the children of the neighborhood. Here the smaller boys and girls find swings, jungle gyms, slide boards, and other play equipment. For the larger children there is a softball field, a concrete play area, and plenty of open space for play.

The Memorial Park Club House is a 21 room house which has a dance floor, lounge, card room, ping pong room, craft shop, club rooms, and a snack bar. The park covers 36 acres. It has three picnic areas,

hiking trails, and is the meeting place of one of the best Teenagers Clubs in the state. Park supervisors have completed a "trail side" museum which is attracting much attention.

The department operates two swimming pools—Legion Pool, which the city leases from the Legion, is the largest outdoor tiled pool in the South. It is located on Lumpkin Street and is easily available to all children of the city. The Riverside Pool is for the colored children of the city. It is surrounded by a small park and there are several picnic areas with tables.



*Lyndon House*

Property for a third park has been donated to the city by the estate of the late Hon. A. G. Dudley, former mayor of Athens. This will be a playground for the children of East Athens. It will be known as the Lon Dudley Park.

In February, 1951 Athens was uniquely honored by the nation's champion women swimmers—300 of them—who held their tryouts for the Pan American Swimming Meets in Stegeman Hall February 9-15, 1951. This pool was chosen because it is the largest college indoor pool in the South and one of the largest in the nation. This event was sponsored by all of the civic clubs of the city and the pool was furnished by the University. The direction of the affair was under the supervision of the Recreational Park Department of the city, making





*Y. M. C. A. Building, Broad and Lumpkin*

this a truly community project. Winners in the meet here went to Argentina late in February for the Pan American tournaments.

The Young Men's Christian Association was organized in Athens in 1857, the third such organization in the United States. The Y.M.C.A. held its first meetings in 2 upstairs rooms over Price's Cafe. Such men as Young L. G. Harris and Thomas R. R. Cobb were prime movers in the organization. The first "Y" gym was in the building now occupied by the Georgia Theater. The "Y" now occupies a building on the



*Y. W. C. A. Buildings*

corner of Lumpkin and Broad. It is fitted with a swimming pool, ping pong tables, and all the usual gymnastic equipment. In the lobby, which is open to the general public, are ping pong tables, pool tables and furniture and equipment for various kinds of games which may be enjoyed by young and old alike.

As of December 1, 1950, there were 674 boys and young men of Athens who participated in the "Y" program. These boys are trained in sports and handicrafts suited to their age groups.

The Young Women's Christian Association was organized in Athens a good many years ago. It is situated on Hancock Avenue, has its own club rooms and ballroom, a concrete skating ground, and a dormitory used in large part by college girls. The purposes of this organization are similar to those of the Y.M.C.A.

At present (1951) there are five theaters in Athens which have a seating capacity of 4,000 and a drive-in theater accommodating 400 cars.

The Athens County Club with a well appointed and spacious club house, an eighteen hole Donald Ross championship golf course (one of the finest in the state), swimming pool, and large, well-stocked lake, is situated just beyond the city limits.



## VI

### A CITY OF BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

**A**THENS and Clarke County are closely related so far as the industrial and business worlds are concerned. In this area are 70 food stores, 4 general stores, 8 general merchandise stores, 19 apparel shops, 8 shoe stores, 14 furniture and household stores, 12 auto supply stores, 34 filling stations, 4 lumber companies, 5 hardware stores, 10 drug stores, 7 jewelry shops, and 106 manufacturing and processing industries.

**ATHENS' OLDEST BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENT:** The Athens Manufacturing Company was chartered in 1828 under the direction of Judge Clayton, John Nisbet, William Dearing, and Abram Walker. According to history, there were 583 free people in town when the factory was built, also "26 four-wheeled carriages and 26 widows." Perhaps the latter, named separately from the free souls, were of particular interest to the company because of the product it manufactured. The original frame building was destroyed by fire in 1834. A second building burned in 1840 and in 1856 the plant was washed away in the



*Lumpkin Street looking north from Clayton*



*Broad Street looking east from Thomas*

Harrison flood. After that disaster, the plant was rebuilt of brick. Parts of this building still stand by the river on Broad Street.

Before the Civil War the company operated with slave labor. When it looked like the Confederates would lose that conflict, the slaves were sold and the company's money was exchanged for gold and given to the British consulate for safe keeping. By this time Athens



*Clayton Street looking northeast from Jackson*



had a population of near 3,000 and a railroad. During the war the mill was the only manufacturing business in town and turned its whole attention to making uniforms for the soldiers.

In 1867 the mill purchased Cook's Armory—the armory had been built to house machinery evacuated from New Orleans. About this time the mill began to manufacture the famous “daisy checks” gingham which won the Gold Medal award at the New Orleans exposition in 1876.

The plant, recently bought by the Chicopee Manufacturing Corporation, is still in operation.



*Original Southern Mutual Building, later moved to corner of Hancock and College to house Georgia Power Offices.*

The second oldest manufacturing establishment in the Athens area is the present Oconee Textile Factory, originally the Georgia Factory which began operation in the late 1830's. This mill has been in continuous operation since its beginning and has made a variety of cotton goods including birdseye diaper cloth, canton flannel and cotton sheeting for cloth bags.

Southern Mutual Insurance Company merits mention in any sketch of the progress of Athens. This company was chartered in 1847 and moved to Athens in 1848. It was originally authorized to transact

many different kinds of insurance—life, fire, marine insurance and insurance on the lives and health of slaves.

The first annual report of the company shows that there had been 388 policies written with a total of property at risk of \$1,796,635. Since the organization of the company, it has collected \$28,413,161 in premiums and has paid in dividends \$12,814,630.



*Southern Mutual Building, 1951*

The company paid its first claim in 1848 for damage done to cotton on Flint River and its first fire loss claim—\$500—the same year to Mr. Albon Chase for “kitchen burned.” in 1849 the company’s assets totalled \$50,913.11. By 1950 they had reached \$2,456,440.25.

Some of the provisions concerning life insurance are interesting. For instance no person would be insured to go south of the 31st degree of latitude between the first of July and the first of November except with the payment of an extra premium.

Michael Bros. Department Store, Athens’ first real department



store, was established in 1882 by Col. M. G. Michael. It was then located on the corner of Broad and Jackson in the building replaced by the Joel Building in 1889 and now occupied by the Athens Appliance Company.



*Clayton Street looking west from Jackson*

The National Bank of Athens, established in 1866 in answer to the need for better banking facilities after the war, has been in continuous operation since that time. John White, moving spirit in the organization of the bank, was born in Ireland in 1799 and come to Athens in 1836. He bought an interest in the Georgia Factory and later became sole owner of the plant. He served as president of the National Bank from 1867 to 1881.



*Clayton and Jackson*



*Broad Street looking west from Thomas*



*County Court House, Washington Street*



The following figures speak plainly of the progress made by the bank over a period of years:

Resources

1866 -----	\$ 321,336.74	1905 -----	\$ 2,280,223.51
1888 -----	681,805.68	1950 -----	10,289,577.65

The bank is a member of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. Since its organization it has paid \$1,926,500 in dividends.

The Athens Branch of Citizens and Southern Bank opened its doors here 25 years ago. This branch is one of 26 offices serving 14 cities in Georgia and South Carolina. The Citizens and Southern System has assets totaling \$307,338,581.75. In 1949 it paid \$600,000 in dividends. It is a member of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

In October, 1928, Mr. L. C. Hubert opened a private banking business concern in Athens. It operated under the name of Hubert Banking Company until November, 1949, sixteen months after Mr. Hubert's death. In November, 1949 it was incorporated as the Hubert State Bank of Athens.

## VII

### THE CITY GOES TO CHURCH



**A**THENS is the home of many faiths. Catholic, Protestant, and Jew have found here a place to worship.

#### CATHOLIC:

In 1873 the Rt. Reverend Bishop Gross of Savannah came to Athens to establish a Catholic Church. He selected a lot on which St. Joseph's now stands. At that time the frame building which had served as a law office for ex-Chief Justice Lumpkin and T. R. R. Cobb came to



be the Roman Chapel in which Catholic services were held until 1913 when the present church was dedicated.



*St. Joseph's*

#### PROTESTANT:

The Presbyterian Church of Athens was organized in 1820 under the leadership of Dr. Moses Waddell, President of the University. There were 18 charter members. The services were first held in the University Chapel and later in a building on the site of the north wing of the Academic building. The present building was erected in 1855.

There are some 25 protestant churches in Athens representing practically every denomination and creed. The oldest church building in Athens stands on Oconee Street below Thomas. It is now used for Red Cross work. The Young Harris Methodist Church on Prince is the newest building.

#### HEBREW:

Approximately 65 years ago the Hebrew Community was organized in Athens. At first the services were presided over by individuals of the Community. Later the Stern Community Center was built and a Rabbi came to Athens to preside over the Community. At present Rabbi Samuel Glassner presides over the community which consists of 25 families and about 90 persons.



*First Presbyterian Church*



*Stern Community House*



## VIII

### A CITY OF MODERN HOUSING

**A**THENS is a city of beautiful old and spacious homes. It is also a city of the most modern housing available—small, one-family dwellings, duplex houses, apartment houses, low-rent government housing units, and large new homes similar to those of olden days but equipped with modern conveniences.

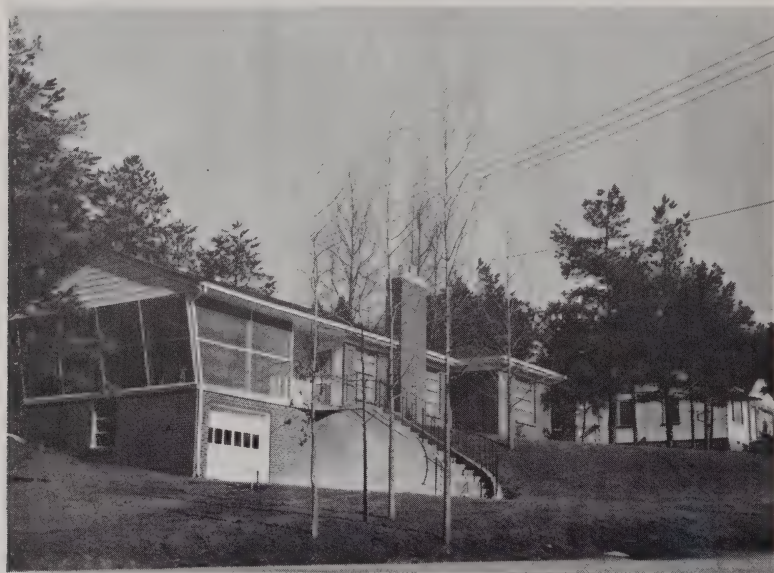
In 1938 a program of slum clearance and low rent housing was initiated in Athens, and since 1940 two developments have been in operation—Park View Homes for 154 white families and Broadacres for 126 Negro families. Rentals in these are determined by the income and size of the family. The family with three or more minor dependents



*Small Home*



pays a smaller percentage of its income for rent than does the smaller family. The size of the apartment has nothing to do with the amount of the rent. When the income of a tenant family approaches such an amount as will enable the family to pay the rental being charged in Athens for decent housing, it is required to vacate to make room for a family of lower income. Rentals, which range from \$8 to \$26 per



*Wildwood Court*

month, include water and electricity for lights and refrigeration. Each apartment is equipped with a circulating heater, a range, hot water tank, work table, double bowl sink, and electric refrigerator. The project houses 1,028 persons. Certainly it has demonstrated the value of decent housing and has helped these families toward becoming better citizens. As an endorsement of the program and with full realization that there is still need for slum clearance in Athens and that there is yet a need for decent housing for low income families, mayor and council have passed appropriate resolutions permitting the local housing authority to take full advantage of the 1949 Housing Act. Plans have been almost completed for 270 additional low rent units which will cost more than \$235,000. This money is to be used for clearing slum areas, preparing them for re-use and offering them to private enterprise for needed urban redevelopment.

## IX

### A CITY NOT WITHOUT RELICS

FOR those who will until they depart this life mourn the passing of the “good old days,” Athens has preserved monuments of the past—but not for these alone, because these relics will delight the old and young of present and future generations as well. Some of them will stand as constant reminders of a civilization gone but not forgotten, delightful in its day but not to be sought after again. A city without relics is a city without a past—but Athens may boast of a very glorious past. Athens is a city of many “first” and “onlys.” It had the first Botanical Garden in the South, is the site of the only tree that owns itself, possesses the only double-barrelled cannon in the world, was the home of the first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia, and can display the first copy of the Constitution of the Confederate States of America.

This “tree that owned itself” stood on Finley Street near Dearing. The story goes that Dr. W. H. Jackson, professor at the University and father of Chief Justice Jackson, had great affection for the Oak under which he had spent many pleasant hours as boy and man. In consideration of this he recorded the following deed: “I, W. H. Jack-



*A Descendant of the Tree That Owned Itself*

son, of the County of Clarke, State of Georgia, of the one part, and the oak tree, of the County of Clarke of the other part, witness, that the said W. H. Jackson, for and in consideration of the great affection which he bears said tree, and in his desire to see it protected, has conveyed, and by these presents does convey unto the said oak tree entire



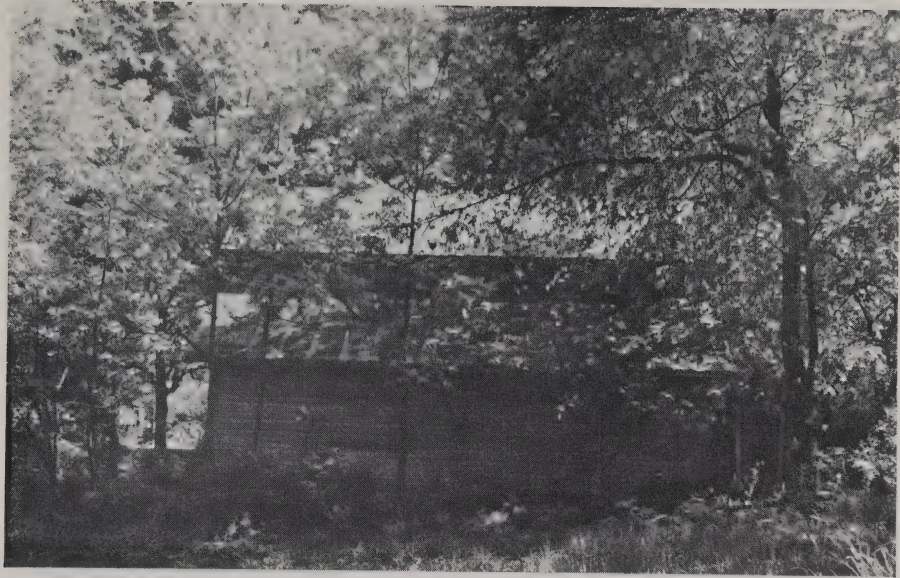
*Site of Memoria-arboretum, living memorial to the founders of the First Garden Club in America*

possession of itself, and of the land within eight feet of it on all sides." The tree is gone now, but the granite posts connected by chains put there by some neighbor to protect it still stand. In 1946 the Junior Ladies Garden Club planted a tree, supposedly a descendant of the one which originally stood there.

If one should wonder about the origin of some of the strange trees and shrubs in the yards along the creek in the ravine extending from Athens High Vocational and Industrial School (once Knox Institute) to Waddell Street, he should recall that once Athens could boast of the most beautiful and interesting botanical gardens in the South. In these gardens were found rare trees and shrubs and flowers from all parts of the world. Here was planted the sprig of willow from Napoleon's grave.

In the rear of St. Joseph's Catholic Church on the corner of Prince and Pulaski, stands the famous "Roman Chapel." This small frame





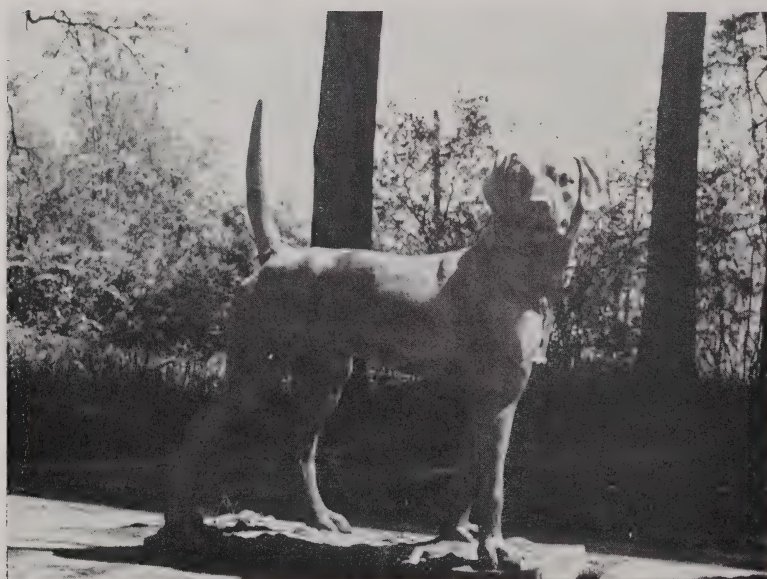
*Roman Chapel*

structure was the law office of Joseph Henry Lumpkin, first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia and one of the most eminent lawyers of his day. Here were held sessions of the Supreme Court when that Court was ambulatory. Here was initiated the Law School of the University. Here were drawn the plans for Lucy Cobb Institute. In this Chapel Catholic services were held until 1913 when St. Joseph's was dedicated.

This is the only double-barrelled cannon in the world. The idea was conceived by John Gilleland, member of the famous Thunderbolts. He thought if the cannon were loaded with two balls connected by a chain, when fired the balls would separate making taut the chain which would mow down the enemy as a scythe mows the wheat before it. The Athens Foundry cast the cannon and it was taken out on the Newton's Bridge Road for trial firing. A wide track was cut through the pines and target poles representing the furthestmost ends of the enemy lines were set up on either side. When all the spectators had been pushed to a safe distance in the rear, the gun was loaded and the balls rammed home. The signal was given, the balls were off, but not at the same speed. The chain broke and the ball which remained connected to it was diverted into the pines. The other ball went wide the mark; the enemy was unharmed. The cannon was taken



*Double-barrelled Cannon*

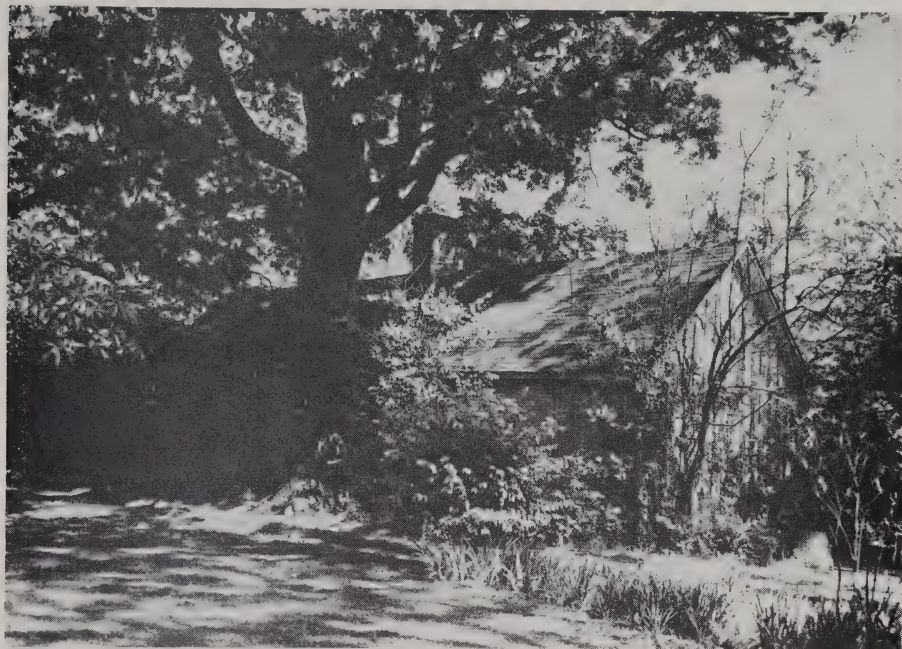


*Dog on Milledge*



from the field and now stands—the only weapon of its kind in the world—on the lawn by the City Hall.

The “Old Grove School,” still stands on Cobb Street in the yard of the old Moss Home, now occupied by Dr. B. O. Williams. The school was kept by Miss Julia Moss originally for the Moss children and later for neighbor children whose parents wanted them to have a formal education.



*Old Grove School*

On the lawn of the old John J. Wilkins home now occupied by his daughter, Mrs. VanCleve Cochran, stands this impressive, though not ferocious, looking dog. That dog once stood beside an equally impressive deer on the Sand Hills of Augusta by the old arsenal on the lot belonging to Mrs. J. O. Mathewson, aunt of Mrs. Cochran. When the Mathewson boys went to Atlanta to enter Georgia Tech, their mother, dog and deer went along. Margaret Mitchell, in “Gone With the Wind,” mentioned the dog and deer which stood on Peachtree at Eighth. Upon the death of Mrs. Mathewson, the dog was placed in the yard of the old Flapper Anne’s House on Milledge, and there it stands as if on guard or merely waiting for some friendly visitor.





*Lucy Cobb Institute*

## X

### A CITY WITH A FUTURE

THE progress and growth of a city, state, or nation depends largely upon the people who dwell therein. It is their spirit, courage, and determination which foretells what the future will hold. Athens has been built by people with the spirit of true progress—people with the determination and courage to meet the challenges of progress.

Athenians are civic minded. Here are to be found more than one hundred organizations devoted to civic, charitable, military, patriotic, educational, fraternal, or religious functions. It is impossible to list them all. An active, well organized Chamber of Commerce is devoted to the business and industrial development of the community. It is comfortably housed in Civic Hall, a modern building located on the City Hall grounds. Among the more important civic organizations with national recognition are Junior Chamber of Commerce, Civitan Club, Exchange Club, Kiwanis Club, Lions Club, Optimist Club, and Rotary Club. Veterans and military interests are represented by three American Legion posts, AMVETS, Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and by reserve units of all branches of the armed forces. Prominent among women's organizations are the League of Women Voters, Clarke County Women Voters, Woman's Club, Junior Assembly, Pilot Club, Entre Nous Club, and several garden clubs. The contributions of such organizations to the life of a community are incalculable. Suffice it to say that Athens could not have made the progress it has without their cooperation and support.

The Athens of the present can give thanks to her citizens of the past for the rich heritage left by them, and as we of today build toward the future—in our homes, churches, schools, and industries—let us remember and keep alive that same spirit which has brought and which will forever insure Athens a high position among the Cities of the Nation.

JACK R. WELLS, *Mayor*

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